

A STRATEGIC APPROACH
to Community
Health
Improvement



MAPP

MOBILIZING FOR ACTION THROUGH
PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS (MAPP)

FIELD GUIDE



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
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HEALTH OFFICIALS**



with additional support from:



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What is MAPP?

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) is a community-wide strategic planning tool for improving community health. Facilitated by public health leadership, this tool helps communities prioritize public health issues and identify resources for addressing them.

The Community Drives the Process

Community ownership is the fundamental component of MAPP. Because the community's strengths, needs, and desires drive the process, MAPP provides the framework for creating a truly community-driven initiative. Community participation leads to collective thinking and, ultimately, results in effective, sustainable solutions to complex problems.

Broad community participation is essential because a wide range of organizations and individuals contribute to the public's health. Public, private, and voluntary organizations join community members and informal associations in the provision of local public health services. The MAPP process brings these diverse interests together to collaboratively determine the most effective way to conduct public health activities.

Vision for Implementing MAPP

“Communities achieving improved health and quality of life by mobilizing partnerships and taking strategic action.”



How MAPP Works

MAPP includes two graphics that illustrate the process communities will undertake.

- In the **MAPP model**, the “phases” of the MAPP process are shown in the center of the model, while the four MAPP Assessments — the key content areas that drive the process — are shown in the four outer arrows.

- In the illustrated “community roadmap,” the process is shown moving along a road that leads to “a healthier community.”

To initiate the MAPP process, lead organizations in the community begin by organizing themselves and preparing to implement MAPP (**Organize for Success/Partnership Development**). Community-wide strategic planning requires a high level of commitment from partners, stakeholders, and the community residents who are recruited to participate.

The second phase of the MAPP process is **Visioning**. A shared vision and common values provide a framework for pursuing long-range community goals. During this phase, the community answers questions such as “*What would we like our community to look like in 10 years?*”

Next, the **four MAPP Assessments** are conducted, providing critical insights into challenges and opportunities throughout the community:

- The **Community Themes and Strengths Assessment** provides a deep understanding of the issues residents



feel are important by answering the questions “*What is important to our community?*” “*How is quality of life perceived in our community?*” and “*What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?*”

- The **Local Public Health System Assessment** (LPHSA) is a comprehensive assessment of all of the organizations and entities that contribute to the public’s health. The LPHSA answers the questions “*What are the activities, competencies, and capacities of our local public health system?*” and “*How are the Essential Services being provided to our community?*”
- The **Community Health Status Assessment** identifies priority issues related to community health and quality of life. Questions answered during the phase include “*How healthy are our residents?*” and “*What does the health status of our community look like?*”
- The **Forces of Change Assessment** focuses on the identification of forces such as legislation, technology, and other issues that affect the context in which the community and its public health system operates. This answers the questions “*What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?*” and “*What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?*”





Once a list of challenges and opportunities has been generated from each of the four assessments, the next step is to **Identify Strategic Issues**. During this phase, participants identify linkages between the MAPP assessments to determine the most critical issues that must be addressed for the community to achieve its vision.

After issues have been identified, participants **Formulate Goals and Strategies** for addressing each issue.

The final phase of MAPP is the **Action Cycle**. During this phase, participants plan, implement, and evaluate. These activities build upon one another in a continuous and interactive manner and ensure continued success.



In-depth MAPP information is available at www.naccho.org. For each phase of the process, the following is available on the MAPP website:

- A conceptual overview
- Practical guidance
- Tools
- References and resources
- Case vignettes

ORGANIZE FOR SUCCESS/ PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

A successful community-wide strategic planning process requires careful preparation. The purpose of this phase is to lay out a planning process that builds commitment, engages participants, uses participants' time well, and results in a plan that can be implemented successfully. These activities are crucial to putting a community on the path toward a successful community health improvement process.

Two interrelated activities occur during this phase:

- **Organize for Success** — A decision is made to undertake MAPP and the planning process is outlined.
- **Partnership Development** — Participants, including the MAPP Committee, are identified and recruited.

How to Conduct the Organize for Success/Partnership Development Phase

Step 1 — Determine the necessity of undertaking the MAPP process

The first step in organizing the MAPP process is gaining a clear understanding of why such a process is needed. This understanding helps focus planning efforts and assists in the recruitment and sustained involvement of participants. In addition to identifying reasons for initiating MAPP, participants should also consider the benefits they hope to gain from the process and the obstacles that may be encountered along the way.

Step 2 — Identify and organize participants

During this step, careful consideration should be given to identifying and recruiting participants. Convenors should seek broad representation from local public health system partners, other community organizations, and community residents. Participants' expectations, time commitments, and logistics should determine how the group will be organized. While the MAPP Committee will provide oversight throughout the process, subcommittees should be identified to carry out specific activities.

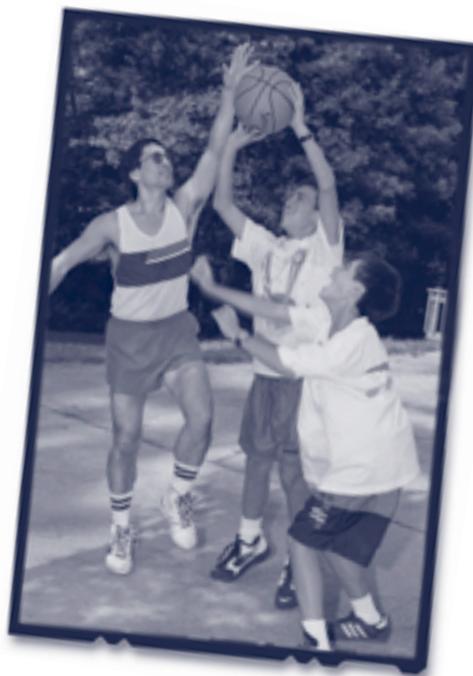
Step 3 — Design the planning process

Designing a process involves answering several related questions: "What will the process entail?" "How long will it take?" "What results are we seeking and how will we know when we are finished?" and "Who will do the work?" All of the MAPP phases should be carefully reviewed and used to develop a timeline and workplan that meets the community's needs.



Step 4 — Assess resource needs and secure commitment

While the principal resources for the planning effort will be time and energy contributed by the participants, other resources will be needed as well. Some of these include: meeting space, refreshments, report production and printing, and costs associated with information gathering and data collection. Participants should identify resource needs and determine sources for meeting those needs. Some resources may be available through in-kind donations from participating organizations.



Step 5 — Conduct a readiness assessment

The information collected in the previous four steps should provide a clear picture of the community's preparedness to begin the MAPP process. As a final review, the readiness assessment should ensure that all of the critical elements are in place.

Step 6 — Manage the process

The final step in organizing the MAPP process is to consider how the process will be managed as it moves forward. This involves paying attention to the many details that may affect the success of a community planning process. Tools such as a project proposal, master calendars, and meeting agendas should be developed. A process for clarifying assignments and managing the work should also be outlined. Careful preparation puts the community on the path to a successful MAPP process.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Organize for Success/ Partnership Development Phase

- Vignette - Chicago, IL
- Tip Sheet - Guidance for Participant Selection
- Tip Sheet - MAPP Budget Development
- Example Timeline/Workplan for the MAPP Process
- Matrix of Participation and Roles within Each Phase of MAPP
- Worksheet - Organizing the Planning Effort: Reasons, Benefits, and Sponsorship
- Worksheet - Organizing the Planning Effort: Barriers
- Worksheet - Participation Selection
- Worksheet - Readiness Assessment

VISIONING

Introduction

The second phase of MAPP — Visioning — guides the community through a collaborative and creative process that leads to a shared community vision and common values.

Vision and values statements provide focus, purpose, and direction to the MAPP process so that participants collectively achieve a shared vision of the future. A shared community vision provides an overarching goal for the community — a statement of what the ideal future looks like. Values are the fundamental principles and beliefs that guide a community-driven planning process.

Because visioning is done at the beginning of the MAPP process, it offers a useful mechanism for convening the community and building enthusiasm for the process, setting the stage for planning, and providing a common framework throughout subsequent phases.

How to Conduct the Visioning Phase

Step 1 — Identify other visioning efforts and make connections as needed

The MAPP Committee should revisit the inventory of other community initiatives to see whether or not visioning efforts have taken place. It is a good idea to rescan community efforts to ensure that no similar efforts have emerged since the Organize for Success phase occurred. If a similar visioning process is in progress or has been completed, try to link it with the MAPP process.

Step 2 — Design the visioning process and select a facilitator

Visioning can be conducted through either of the following approaches:

- Community visioning — a broad-based process with 40-100 participants. Community visioning is useful for

engaging and mobilizing the broader community, but can be more challenging to manage and may require more resources to implement.

- Advisory committee/key leadership visioning — Participants include members of the MAPP Committee, as well as other key leaders in the community. This type of visioning process may be easier to manage and requires fewer resources, but will not include the ideal level of broad involvement.

Once an approach is selected, a small group is charged with preparing the visioning sessions, identifying and working with the facilitator, recording the results of the sessions, and drafting the resulting vision and values statements.

Step 3 — Conduct the visioning process

Visioning sessions are conducted using the method described on the MAPP website or another approach. As the process is implemented, it is important to ensure that a broad range of participants are included in the effort.

Both a shared vision and common values should be identified through brainstorming and open discussions.

Sample questions for brainstorming a shared vision:

1. What does a healthy Anywhere County mean to you?
2. What are important characteristics of a healthy community for all who live, work, and play here?
3. How do you envision the local public health system in the next five or ten years?

Sample questions for brainstorming common values:

1. Taking into consideration the vision that has been developed, what key behaviors will be required from the local public health system partners, the community, and others in the next five to ten years to achieve the vision?
2. What type of working environment or climate will be necessary to support these behaviors and achieve the vision?



Step 4 — Formulate vision and values statements

Next, a small group formulates the vision and values statements based on the outcomes of the visioning session(s). The vision statement should be strong and powerful and represent the ideal future outlined during the visioning process. The values statement should emphasize a positive climate and supportive behaviors that contribute to the achievement of the vision.

Step 5 — Keep the vision and values alive throughout the MAPP process

As the community moves through the MAPP process, it is important to ensure that the vision statement continues to drive the MAPP effort. Ways to keep the vision and values alive include reading the statements at meetings or including them on informational materials. Both may be refined as the community progresses through the planning process.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Visioning Phase

- Vignettes - Miller County, GA, Stratford, CT, and Chicago, IL
- Tip Sheet - A Step-by-Step Approach to Visioning

THE FOUR MAPP ASSESSMENTS COMMUNITY THEMES AND STRENGTHS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment answers the following questions: “*What is important to our community?*” “*How is quality of life perceived in our community?*” and “*What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?*”

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment is a vital part of a community health improvement process. During this phase, community thoughts, opinions, and concerns are gathered, providing insight into the issues of importance to the community. Feedback about quality of life in the community and community assets is also gathered. This information leads to a portrait of the community as seen through the eyes of its residents.

By including Community Themes and Strengths in the MAPP process, several benefits are gained.

- Community members become more vested in the process when they have a sense of ownership in and responsibility for the outcomes. This occurs when their concerns are genuinely considered and visibly affect the process.
- The impressions and thoughts of community residents help to pinpoint important issues and highlight possible solutions.
- The themes and issues identified here offer additional insight into the findings uncovered in the other assessments.

Listening to and communicating with the community are essential to any community-wide initiative. Mobilizing and engaging the community may be a daunting task. However, when successful, it ensures greater sustainability and enthusiasm for the process.

How to Conduct the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Step 1 — Prepare for the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Establish a subcommittee to oversee the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment. This subcommittee should determine the most effective approaches for gathering community perspectives. Possible approaches include:

- community meetings
- community dialogue sessions
- focus groups
- walking or windshield surveys
- individual discussions/interviews
- surveys

The subcommittee should carefully select a variety of approaches that will best reach broad segments of the population. Then, identify the skills and resources needed to conduct the activities.

Three levels of information-gathering occur during the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment:

- **Open discussion to elicit community concerns, opinions, and comments in an unstructured way** - Asking open-ended questions ensures that issues of concern and interest to the community are raised. If concerns are properly addressed, this activity can raise the credibility of the process and underscore its community-driven nature.
- **Perceptions regarding community quality of life** - Questions about quality of life in the community help pinpoint specific concerns. This may highlight aspects of neighborhoods and/or communities that either enhance or diminish residents’ quality of life.
- **A map of community assets** - Asset mapping is an important tool for mobilizing community resources. Through this process, the capacities of individuals, civic associations, and local institutions are inventoried.





Step 3 — Compile the results of the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

The subcommittee should keep a running list of ideas, comments, quotes, and themes while the activities are being implemented. Subcommittee members should also note possible solutions to identified problems or innovative ideas for providing public health services. The results of this phase are compiled into one central list.

Step 4 — Ensure that community involvement and empowerment is sustained

While the specific activities conducted (i.e., focus groups, windshield surveys) occur on a finite timeline, the dialogue that has opened up within the community should be never-ending. Participants involved in the Community Themes and Strengths activities should continue to be involved throughout the remaining phases of the MAPP process.

Step 2 — Implement information-gathering activities

When implementing selected activities, the broadest participation possible should be included. The subcommittee should identify groups or individuals whose voices are not being heard. Also, the subcommittee should ensure that the logistics — how, when, and where the meetings are held — promote good participation.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

- Vignettes - Alameda, CA, Santa Clara, CA, Jasper County, SC, and Chicago, IL
- Tip Sheet - Conducting a Community Dialogue
- Tip Sheet - A Step-by-Step Approach to Conducting a Focus Group
- Worksheet - List of Issues, Perceptions, and Assets

THE FOUR MAPP ASSESSMENTS LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA) answers the questions, “*What are the components, activities, competencies, and capacities of our local public health system?*” and “*How are the Essential Services being provided to our community?*”

The LPHSA focuses on the local public health system — all organizations and entities within the community that contribute to the public’s health. The LPHSA uses the Essential Public Health Services as the fundamental framework for assessing the local public health system. The Essential Services list the ten public health activities that should be undertaken in all communities.

The Essential Public Health Services

1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems.
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

How to Conduct the Local Public Health System Assessment

Step 1 — Prepare for the Local Public Health System Assessment

A subcommittee should be established to oversee the LPHSA process. Subcommittee members should represent diverse segments of the local public health system. Once the subcommittee is convened, members review LPHSA steps and tools and plan how each step will be implemented.

Step 2 — Discuss the Essential Services and identify where each organization/entity is active

The first LPHSA meeting should focus on orienting participants to the Essential Services. After a brief overview of the Essential Services framework, each participant shares information about where his/her organization is active. Posting the information on flip charts can be a fun and easy way to do this. The last part of the meeting should be devoted to a dialogue about the Essential Services and how each organization contributes to them. This discussion will help identify opportunities for collaboration, gaps in service provision, and overlapping activities.

Step 3 — Discuss and complete the performance measurement instrument

During the next step the MAPP Committee discusses and completes the performance measures instrument. The instrument provides two to four indicators (or activities) under each

The LPHSA uses the local-level standards found in the National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHSP). This instrument was developed collaboratively by CDC and NACCHO. (See www.phppo.cdc.gov/dphs/nphsp)



Essential Service. By responding to the questions related to each indicator, participants get a good idea of the activities, capacities, and performance of the local public health system. To respond to the instrument, the MAPP Committee should discuss the information in the tool until a consensus emerges. This discussion should include perspectives from the organizations conducting public health activities as well as community resident input.

Step 4 — Review the results and determine challenges and opportunities

During this step, participants discuss the results and identify challenges and opportunities. The results of the previous steps should highlight activity levels and coordination among partners. Through discussion, participants should be able to categorize the indicators (from the performance measures instrument) into a list of challenges and opportunities. The list should be comprehensive enough to include the issues identified in the assessment, but short enough (i.e., 10-15 items) for the local public health system to address many of them.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Local Public Health System Assessment

- Vignettes - East Tennessee Region, TN, St. Louis County, MO, and Chicago, IL
- Local Public Health System Performance Measures Instrument
- Worksheet - LPHSA Challenges and Opportunities

THE FOUR MAPP ASSESSMENTS

COMMUNITY HEALTH STATUS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Community Health Status Assessment (CHSA) answers the question, “How healthy are our residents?” and “What does the health status of our community look like?” The results of the CHSA provide the MAPP Committee with an understanding of the community’s health status and ensure that the community’s priorities consider specific health status issues, such as high lung cancer rates or low immunization rates.

The CHSA provides a list of core indicators (data elements) for 11 broad-based categories. Communities may also select additional indicators. By gathering data for each of the categories and assessing changes over time or differences among population subgroups or with peer, state, or national data, health issues are identified.

Categories of Data Collected in the CHSA

Who are we and what do we bring to the table?

1. Demographic Characteristics
2. Socioeconomic Characteristics
3. Health Resource Availability

What are the strengths and risks in our community that contribute to health?

4. Quality of Life
5. Behavioral Risk Factors
6. Environmental Health Indicators

What is our health status?

7. Social and Mental Health
8. Maternal and Child Health
9. Death, Illness and Injury
10. Infectious Disease
11. Sentinel Events

How to Conduct the Community Health Status Assessment

Step 1 — Prepare for the Community Health Status Assessment

A subcommittee should be designated to oversee the CHSA. Members should include individuals that can assist with access to data as well as data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Community representatives also provide an important perspective. Once the subcommittee is assembled, members should review the CHSA steps and identify the skills and resources needed to conduct the activities.

Step 2 — Collect data for the core indicators on the CHSA indicator list

During this step, data related to the MAPP “core indicators” (see MAPP website) should be collected, including trend and comparison data. Trend data will help to identify changes in data over time, while comparison data will measure a community’s health status against other jurisdictions. Data collection may require considerable time and effort. Therefore, it is important to begin this activity early in the MAPP process.

Step 3 — Identify locally-appropriate indicators and collect the data

The selection of locally-appropriate indicators helps the MAPP Committee better describe the community’s health status and quality of life in terms that are of particular interest to the community. Additional indicators might be selected

NACCHO’s *Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH)* is a useful resource for identifying environmental health indicators.



related to community interest in a specific topic, demographics in the area (e.g., an aging population) or information found in the core indicators (e.g., the need to look closer at cancer rates). To keep data collection efforts reasonable in terms of time and resources, select indicators of high priority and relevance only.

Step 4 — Organize and analyze the data; develop a compilation of the findings; and disseminate the information.

Individuals with statistical expertise should analyze data. Disparities among age, gender, racial, and other population subgroups are especially important. Once the data are analyzed, a compilation of the findings or a “community health profile” should be developed. The community health profile should include visual aids, such as charts and graphs, that display the data in an understandable and meaningful way. The community health profile should be disseminated and shared with the community.

Step 5 — Establish a system to monitor the indicators over time

During this step, the subcommittee establishes a system for monitoring selected indicators. This helps to ensure that continuous health status monitoring occurs and establishes baseline data upon which future trends can be identified. This system will also be instrumental in evaluating the success of MAPP activities.

Step 6 — Identify challenges and opportunities related to health status

The CHSA should result in a list of challenges and opportunities related to the community’s health status. Data findings should be reviewed to identify challenges, such as major health problems or high-risk behaviors, and opportunities, such as improving health trends. Ideally, the final list will include 10-15 community health status issues that will be more closely examined in the Identify Strategic Issues phase of MAPP.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Community Health Status Assessment

- Vignettes - Miller County, GA, Peoria City-County, IL, and Chicago, IL
- Core Indicators for the 11 CHSA Categories
- Appendix - Menu of Possible Extended Indicators for the 11 CHSA Categories
- Tip Sheet - Presenting Data
- Tip Sheet - Data Issues in Areas with Small Populations

THE FOUR MAPP ASSESSMENTS

FORCES OF CHANGE ASSESSMENT



Introduction

During the Forces of Change Assessment, participants answer the following questions: *“What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?”* and *“What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?”* The Forces of Change Assessment should result in a comprehensive, but focused, list that identifies key forces and describes their impacts.

While it may not seem obvious at first, the broader environment is constantly affecting communities and local public health systems. State and federal legislation, rapid technological advances, changes in the organization of health care services, shifts in economic forces, and changing family structures and gender roles are all examples of Forces of Change. These forces are important because they affect — either directly or indirectly — the health and quality of life in the community and the effectiveness of the local public health system.

During this phase, participants engage in brainstorming sessions aimed at identifying forces. Forces are a broad all-encompassing category that includes trends, events, and factors.

- **Trends are patterns over time**, such as migration in and out of a community or a growing disillusionment with government.
- **Factors are discrete elements**, such as a community’s large ethnic population, an urban setting, or the jurisdiction’s proximity to a major waterway.
- **Events are one-time occurrences**, such as a hospital closure, a natural disaster, or the passage of new legislation.

How to Conduct the Forces of Change Assessment

Step 1 — Prepare for the Forces of Change Assessment

During this step, a small group responsible for overseeing the Forces of Change Assessment should prepare for the brainstorming sessions. This group determines who will facilitate the process and how the sessions will be run. Additionally, each member of the MAPP Committee should begin thinking about the major forces that affect public health or the community. This helps to ensure that everyone comes to the meeting prepared.

Step 2 — Convene a brainstorming session to identify forces of change

Next, the MAPP Committee should hold a brainstorming session to identify forces of change. Through facilitated and structured brainstorming discussions, committee members share ideas, identify new forces, and develop a comprehensive list.



Once a comprehensive list of forces has been developed, the MAPP Committee (or a small group of designated individuals) reviews and fully discusses each item on the list. An organized list is developed by combining forces that are similar or linked. Other items on the list may need to be deleted, added, or further refined.

Step 3 — Identify potential threats and opportunities for each force of change

Committee members evaluate each force, and for each, identify associated threats and opportunities for the community and the local public health system. In some cases, a force might only be identified with a threat, while in other instances, it may be perceived as both a threat and an opportunity.

The final list is tabled until it is time to conduct the Identify Strategic Issues phase of the MAPP process. Participants then review each of the issues identified in the other MAPP assessments in light of the forces of change, and discuss the associated threats and opportunities. This activity ensures that strategic issues are relevant to the changing environment.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Forces of Change Assessment

- Vignettes - Miller County, GA, East Tennessee, TN, and Chicago, IL
- Worksheet - Forces of Change Brainstorming
- Worksheet - Forces of Change - Threats and Opportunities

IDENTIFY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Introduction

Strategic issues are those fundamental policy choices or critical challenges that must be addressed for a community to achieve its vision.

During this phase of the MAPP process, participants develop an ordered list of the most important issues facing the community. When addressing “strategic” issues, a community is being proactive in positioning itself for the future, rather than simply reacting to problems.

Strategic issues should reflect the results of all of the previous MAPP phases. Up to this point, the process has largely focused on developing a shared vision and identifying challenges and opportunities for improving community health. Strategic issues reveal what is truly important from the vast amount of information that was gathered in the four MAPP Assessments. Identifying strategic issues can be compared to pouring the assessment findings into a funnel — what emerges is a distilled mix of issues that demand attention.

How to Identify Strategic Issues

Step 1 — Brainstorm potential strategic issues

Participants should begin by reviewing the shared vision, common values, and results of the four MAPP Assessments. They should ask, “What factors identified in the assessments must be addressed in order to achieve the vision?” As participants discuss this question, they should try to identify where results converge. The adjacent example shows how results from each of the four assessments can point to a major issue. Each potential strategic issue should be phrased as a question.

Identifying Strategic Issues - Example

Strategic Issue: How can the public health community ensure access to population-based and personal health care services?

Vision: Accessible services.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment: Lack of insurance; language/cultural barriers; need for more services for seniors; lack of day care; inconvenient hours.

Local Public Health System Assessment: Somewhat high use of referral mechanisms; outreach is targeted, but possibly not at correct populations.

Community Health Status Assessment: High need for affordable health care; high use of emergency rooms; lack of insurance.

Forces of Change Assessment: Inadequate insurance coverage; disparities exacerbated by access challenges and racism.

Step 2 — Develop an understanding about why an issue is strategic

After strategic issues are identified, participants should discuss each issue until they understand why it is strategic. The definition and criteria for strategic issues — provided on the MAPP website — is a useful resource. This discussion will help to separate strategic issues from other problems. Participants must understand the issues to be able to make wise decisions about how to address them.

Step 3 — Determine the consequences of not addressing an issue

Next, participants should consider each strategic issue and ask, “What are the consequences of not addressing this?” This will help participants determine whether or not action is required. Strategic issues may have significant consequences for the community or the local public health system and failure to address them could lead to serious repercussions.



Step 4 — Consolidate overlapping or related issues

At this point, a large number of strategic issues may have been identified. Participants should examine all of these issues and consolidate them into a limited number of non-overlapping issues. Ideally, a community should have no more than 12 strategic issues; the fewer, the better.

Step 5 — Arrange issues into an ordered list

Finally, the strategic issues should be ordered into a list. When developing this list, participants determine if certain issues should be addressed first, if there are issues with immediate consequences, or if there are timelines or upcoming events that may help or hinder addressing an issue. In some cases, communities may decide to address simpler issues first in an effort to build the necessary momentum and teamwork for addressing more complex, controversial issues.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Identify Strategic Issues Phase

- Vignette - Chicago, IL
- Worksheet - Strategic Issues Relationship Diagram
- Worksheet Example - Strategic Issues Relationship Diagram (Chicago, IL Example)
- Worksheet - Strategic Issues Identification

FORMULATE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Introduction

During this phase, participants formulate goals and specific strategies for each of the strategic issues identified in the previous phase. Goals and strategies provide a connection between the current reality (what the local public health system and the community look like now) and the vision (what the local public health system and community will look like in the future). Together, the goals and strategies provide a comprehensive picture of how local public health system partners will achieve a healthy community.

In developing goals and strategies, communities answer the following questions:

Goals — What do we want to achieve by addressing this strategic issue?

Strategies — How do we want to achieve it? What action is needed?

How to Formulate Goals and Strategies

Step 1 — Develop goals related to the vision and strategic issues

Participants begin by revisiting both the vision and the strategic issues. By identifying how the strategic issues link to the vision, participants develop goals that will be achieved when those issues are resolved. Whereas the vision presents what the community wants to ultimately achieve in an idealistic manner (e.g., “healthy children”), goals capture these results in more concrete terms (e.g., “Age-appropriate vaccinations for all children.”). This activity may be best accomplished by a small group that



later presents its results to the MAPP Committee for discussion.

Step 2 — Generate strategy alternatives

During this step, participants identify potential strategies for achieving goals and attaining the community vision. Several strategies should be identified for each strategic issue. These strategy alternatives reflect the range of choices from which the community may select to reach its vision. Strategy alternatives should build upon strengths and opportunities while also countering the threats reflected in the strategic issues. This step may be undertaken through small group brainstorming discussions.

Step 3 — Consider barriers to implementation

Next, the small groups continue brainstorming discussions in an effort to identify barriers to



implementation. Barriers may take the form of insufficient resources, lack of community support, legal or policy impediments to authority, technological difficulties, etc. Barriers will not necessarily eliminate strategy alternatives. However, they should alert the community to obstacles that may be encountered if that alternative is pursued.

Step 4 — Consider implementation details

Here, the small groups flesh out details related to implementing each strategy alternative. Participants should explore issues such as needed activities, timelines, participation, and resources. Thinking about implementation details at this stage helps to identify and refine the best strategies. It also lays the groundwork for the next phase — the Action Cycle.

Step 5 — Select and adopt strategies

After the previous steps have been completed, the best strategy alternatives should become clearer. At this point, participants should examine the alternatives together to understand their relationships to one another. Understanding the interrelationship between strategies offers a comprehensive picture of the larger strategy that the community will implement to achieve the vision. Next, participants test the strategy alternatives against

agreed-upon selection criteria. Once the strategies are selected, they should be adopted.

Step 6 — Draft the planning report

The final step is to develop a draft planning report. A written planning report: serves as a reference; tests consensus about agreements; and communicates the vision, goals, and strategies to partners and the broader community. Once the document is complete, it should be adopted by the MAPP Committee. This step marks the completion of the planning process and a time to celebrate the hard work. The plan should also be disseminated and shared throughout the community.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Formulate Goals and Strategies Phase

- Vignettes - St. Louis County, MO, Peoria City-County, IL, and Chicago, IL
- Worksheet - Strategy Development
- Worksheet - Strategy Development Matrix

THE ACTION CYCLE

Introduction

The Action Cycle links three key activities — Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation. Each of these activities builds upon the others in a continuous and interactive manner.

The Action Cycle may be the most satisfying and challenging phase of the MAPP process. During this phase, the efforts of the previous phases begin to produce results, as the local public health system develops and implements an action plan for addressing the strategic issues. Yet, this is where it becomes increasingly important to sustain the process and continue implementation over time.

The Action Cycle can be summarized as follows:

- Planning — Determining what will be done, who will do it, and how it will be done.
- Implementation — Carrying out the activities identified in the planning stage.
- Evaluation — Determining what has been accomplished.

How to Conduct the Action Cycle

Planning for Action

Step 1 — Organize for action

The first step in this phase is organizing for action. A subcommittee should be designated to oversee the implementation and evaluation activities. This subcommittee prepares for the subsequent steps and plans for how they will be implemented. If key participants — those who will play a role in implementing and evaluating strategies — are not currently involved in the MAPP process, they should be recruited to participate.

Step 2 — Develop objectives and establish accountability

For successful implementation, it is important to know where you are headed, who is responsible for getting you there, and how you are going to get there. To accomplish this, MAPP participants develop measurable outcome objectives for the identified strategies. Participants then agree on accountability or responsibility for each objective.

Step 3 — Develop action plans

The outcome objectives must now be translated into specific action plans to be carried out by accountable participants. Action planning will help to identify specific activities, timeframes, and needed resources. Action plans may be organization-specific or may call for collective action from a number of organizations.

Implementation

Step 4 — Review action plans for opportunities for coordination

After individual and collective action plans have been developed, the MAPP Committee reviews them to identify common or duplicative activities and seeks ways to combine or coordinate the use of limited community resources. A quick review of the four MAPP Assessments may be useful for exploring assets, strengths, and opportunities.

Step 5 — Implement and monitor action plans

Each MAPP participant should be involved in implementing a minimum of one strategy. In addition, MAPP participants should regularly consider whether other organizations or individuals should be brought on board to more effectively implement strategies. Community awareness and participation ensures that action plans are appropriately and effectively implemented.



Evaluation

Step 6 — Prepare for evaluation activities

When preparing for evaluation, participants should first consider what they are evaluating. An evaluation of the entire MAPP process and each strategy should be conducted. Next, participants should think about the stakeholders that should be involved. These may include individuals whose professional work relates to the activity being implemented, or people who will be affected by its implementation.

Step 7 — Focus the evaluation design

The next step is to design the evaluation. At this stage, the evaluation team should select: the questions that the evaluation will answer, the process for answering these questions, the methodology to be used in collecting answers, a plan for carrying out the evaluation activities, and a strategy for reporting the results of the evaluation.

Step 8 — Gather credible evidence and justify conclusions

During this step, MAPP participants collect data to answer the evaluation questions. Once credible data are gathered, the evaluation team decides what the data indicate: Did the activity do what it set out to do? How effective was it? The evaluation team should also justify its conclusions.

Step 9 — Share lessons learned and celebrate successes

Finally, results of the evaluation are used and shared with others. Evaluation results can improve existing processes and help create new strategies and activities.

Evaluation results may also pinpoint successes and positive results. Participants should celebrate these successes. Continuous celebration and recognition of the hard work will go a long way toward sustaining momentum and keeping the process alive.



Tools and Tip Sheets for the Action Cycle

- Vignettes - Peoria City-County, IL, St. Louis County, MO, Miller County, GA, and Chicago, IL
- Tip Sheet - Description of Terms Used in Objective-Setting



M A P P

MOBILIZING FOR ACTION THROUGH
PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS (MAPP)

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